المجلس الإسلامي الأوروبي
Islamic Council of Europe

28 February 1983

Mr Tom Urwin
Chairman
Political Affairs Committee
Parliamentary Assembly
Council of Europe
Strasbourg

Dear Mr Urwin,

The Islamic Council of Europe has followed with great interest the Council of Europe's debates and resolutions concerning Turkey, particularly the statements referring to the return to democratic rule.

You may remember that we were in touch with you in 1981 concerning the arrest of Dr Necmettin Erbakan , leader of the National Salvation Party and a former Deputy Prime Minister, and other colleagues of his, and you will know that Dr Erbakan and others have now been sentenced, by a military court, to 4 years' imprisonment.

It can be stated absolutely that Dr Erbakan and his colleagues are being punished solely for their beliefs. They have never been involved in any act of violence - their crime is that they are Muslims who have not been afraid to express their beliefs and convictions, and for this they are subjected to harsh sentences. This is another sad example of Turkey's repressive policies; other recent actions have included the banning of the wear of headscarves and trousers by women and of beards by university students and professors.

We appeal to the Council of Europe collectively to bring pressure to bear on a member state and to urge Turkey to conduct its affairs with more justice, fairness and equality, and with greater respect for the international declarations on human rights.

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

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Secretary General

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